

**National Science Foundation  
4201 Wilson Boulevard  
Arlington, VA 22203**

Directorate for Geosciences  
Office of the Assistant Director

NSF 06-007

November 30, 2005

SUBJECT: Request for Community Input on Cyberinfrastructure Support for Geoscience Education

Dear Colleague:

This letter solicits your input regarding the future characteristics of cyberinfrastructure in support of geoscience education. Cyberinfrastructure in support of geoscience education is currently provided by the Digital Library for Earth System Education (DLESE). (See <http://www.dlese.org>) In fiscal year 2006, the Directorate for Geosciences intends to entertain new and/or renewal proposals to design, maintain and operate the next generation of geoscience education cyberinfrastructure.

The Directorate for Geosciences would like to receive input from the community regarding design specifications for the future cyberinfrastructure component of the geoscience education portfolio. Topics you may wish to address include:

- What basic services and architectures should be provided to enable inquiry-based learning for users of a geoscience-education website (e.g., the ability to search by topic or grade level, discovery and delivery of scientific information related to current events, and the ability to personalize web interfaces)?
- What cyber services should be provided to educators (e.g., relationship to National Science Education Standards, information about best-practices, teaching guides, educational assessment tools)?
- What services should be provided to educators and scientists who wish to submit educational materials for publication on a geoscience-education website (e.g., assistance with format, keywords, or metadata)?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of maintaining a collection in addition to linking to external resources/collections and providing metadata resources?

All community input will be carefully considered by the Directorate for Geosciences. **We request that you submit no more than three (3) pages**, single-spaced, of information in response to this Dear Colleague Letter. In addition to the questions posed above, respondents should feel free to include any additional information related to the topic in their submission, as long as the total length of the submission is less than three (3) pages. Your input can be emailed to [dlesecomments@nsf.gov](mailto:dlesecomments@nsf.gov), by January 31, 2006.

We thank you for your interest and assistance as the Directorate for Geosciences plans for the future of cyberinfrastructure in support of geoscience education.

Sincerely,

Margaret Leinen  
Assistant Director